

Confucius is a representative figure of traditional Chinese culture. The moral values he advocated, and the belief in heaven above, have been passed down through the generations for more than 2,000 years.

However, the Chinese communist regime since 2004 has hijacked the Confucius name and invested large amounts of money to set up Confucius Institutes at colleges and universities, as well as Confucius Classrooms in high schools, middle schools and elementary schools in foreign countries.

These institutes are an important tool for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to spread its culture overseas.

The “culture” the Chinese communist regime has been advocating is the communist ideology, with atheism as its core principle. Starting from the beginning of the 21st century, the CCP has stipulated the importance of “improving the soft power of culture.”

Soft power

The concept of “soft power” was first coined and introduced in 1990 by Harvard professor Joseph S. Nye. Soft power lies in the ability to attract and persuade. Whereas hard power—the ability to coerce—grows out of a country's military or economic might, soft power arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies.

However, the CCP's definition of soft power is completely different from the commonly recognized concept of soft power in the contemporary international community. The nature of the CCP's soft power is determined by its core ideology of (totalitarian) socialism. For the CCP, soft power basically refers to its brainwashing power inside China and its infiltrative power outside China. The Confucius Institute is the CCP's United Front organization's soft power weapon of foreign affairs. It's an all important tool for CCP to spread its core ideology and enhance its United Front setup.

New report exposes CCP's soft power in U.S.

The National Association of Scholars (NAS) has just released the results of a comprehensive investigation into Confucius Institutes in the USA. ***It recommended the closure of all Confucius Institutes.***

A brief summary of its findings:

Confucius Institutes are teaching and research centers located at colleges and universities, underwritten by the Chinese government. Since 2005, more than 100 Confucius Institutes (CIs) have opened in the United States; 103 remain in operation. These Institutes, many offering for-credit courses in Chinese language and culture, are largely staffed and funded by an agency of the Chinese government's Ministry of Education—the Office of Chinese Languages Council International, better known as the Hanban.

The Hanban also operates similarly organized Confucius Classrooms (CCs) at 501 primary and secondary schools in the United States. These 604 educational outposts comprise a plurality of China's 1,579 Confucius Institutes and Classrooms worldwide.

Confucius Institutes frequently attract scrutiny because of their close ties to the Chinese government. A stream of stories indicates that intellectual freedom, merit-based hiring policies, and other foundational principles of American higher education have received short shrift in Confucius Institutes.

Secrecy

The Hanban has shrouded Confucius Institutes in secrecy. At most Institutes, the terms of agreement are hidden. China's leaders have not assuaged worries that the Institutes may teach political lessons that unduly favor China. In 2009, Li Changchun, then the head of propaganda for the Chinese Communist Party and a member of the party's Politburo Standing Committee, called Confucius Institutes "***an important part of China's overseas propaganda set-up.***"

We conducted case studies at twelve Confucius Institutes—two in New Jersey and ten in New York—and asked about hiring policies, funding arrangements, contracts between the Hanban and the university, pressure on affiliated faculty members, and more. This report is the result of that investigation.

We found cause for concern in four areas:

1. ***Intellectual freedom***

Official Hanban policy requires Confucius Institutes to adhere to Chinese law, including speech

codes. Chinese teachers hired, paid by, and accountable to the Chinese government face pressures to avoid sensitive topics, and American professors report pressure to self-censor.

2. **Transparency**

Contracts between American universities and the Hanban, funding arrangements, and hiring policies for Confucius Institute staff are rarely publicly available. Some universities went to extraordinary efforts to avoid scrutiny, cancelling meetings and forbidding NAS from visiting campus.

3. **Entanglement**

Confucius Institutes are central nodes in a complex system of relationships with China. Confucius Institutes attract full-tuition-paying Chinese students, fund scholarships for American students to study abroad, and offer other resources. Universities with financial incentives to please China find it more difficult to criticize Chinese policies.

4. **Soft Power**

Confucius Institutes tend to present China in a positive light and to focus on anodyne aspects of Chinese culture. They avoid Chinese political history and human rights abuses, present Taiwan and Tibet as undisputed territories of China, and develop a generation of American students with selective knowledge of a major country.

Banned topics include Falun Gong, Taiwan and Tibetan independence and discussion of the Tiananmen Square Massacre.

[See full report here](#)